

Command and Coordination in Humanitarian Assistance Operations

Karen D. Smith

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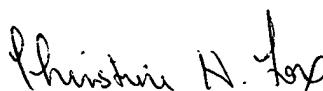
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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

*Form Approved
OPM No. 0704-0188*

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources gathering and maintaining the data needed, and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503.

1. AGENCY USE ONLY (<i>Leave Blank</i>)		2. REPORT DATE	3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED	
		April 1996	Final	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Command and Coordination in Humanitarian Assistance Operations			5. FUNDING NUMBERS C - N00014-96-D-0001 PE - 65153M PR - C0031	
6. AUTHOR(S) Karen D. Smith				
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Center for Naval Analyses 4401 Ford Avenue Alexandria, Virginia 22302-0268			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER CRM 95-165.10	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Commanding General Marine Corps Combat Development Command (WF 13) Studies and Analyses Branch Quantico, Virginia 22134			10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER	
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES				
12a. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Cleared for public release. Specific Authority: N00014-96-D-0001. Other requests for this document must be referred to the Commanding General, Marine Corps Combat Development Command (WF13).			12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE	
13. ABSTRACT (<i>Maximum 200 words</i>) The Marine Corps Combat Development Command asked the Center for Naval Analyses to analyze how the Marine Corps could improve its ability to conduct humanitarian assistance operations. We identified changes to doctrine, equipment, organization and training that would support Marine Corps commanders and troops tasked to perform these missions. This research memorandum identifies issues, requirements, and alternatives in the area of command and control. The focus is on command relationships and coordination.				
14. SUBJECT TERMS Civil Affairs, Command and Control, Cooperation, Foreign Aid, HAO (Humanitarian Assistance Operation), Infrastructure, Interoperability, Joint Military Activities, Military Assistance, Military Commanders, Military Doctrine, Military Organization, Military Training, Peacetime			15. NUMBER OF PAGES 38 pages	
16. PRICE CODE				
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE Unclassified	19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT SAR	

NSN 7540-01-280-5500

Standard Form 298, (Rev. 2-89)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39-18
299-01

Contents

Summary and introduction	1
Analytical approach	1
Findings.	2
Recommendations	3
Road map.	5
Command issues in HAOs	7
A multitude of participants.	7
Accountability	10
Who's in charge?	10
Who should do what?	12
The role of the military	14
Political	14
Supporting	14
Command issues conclusions	15
Improving command and coordination	17
U.S. military	18
Forming a Joint Task Force	18
Attitudes.	19
Liaison officers	19
Translator-linguists	19
Tracking skills.	20
Training	20
Building and operating a coalition	20
Ensuring common understanding of the operation.	21
Simplifying and clarifying the chain of command	22
Assigning missions and sequencing forces	22
Communicating with coalition members	23
Coordination within the U.S. Government.	24
The role of the CINC.	24

Interagency coordination	24
Direct coordination with outside organizations	25
Coordination with the UN	25
Coordination with NGOs/PVOs/IOs	26
Mechanisms to facilitate coordination among all participants	27
Designing new mechanisms	28
Assessment for intervention	29
Interagency Assessment Team	29
Information fusion	30
Planning	31
Washington Coordination Group	31
Execution	31
Civil Military Operations Center	32
Focus-of-effort teams	33
Executive Steering Group	35
Wrap-up	37

Summary and introduction

The Marine Corps Combat Development Command (MCCDC) asked the Center for Naval Analyses (CNA) to analyze how the Marine Corps could improve its ability to conduct humanitarian assistance operations (HAOs). We identified changes to doctrine, equipment, organization, and training that would support Marine Corps commanders and troops tasked to perform these missions. In the course of the study, the Commanding General, First Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) joined our effort as a co-sponsor. He asked us to support Emerald Express '95 (EE 95), a conference sponsored by I MEF and the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR). The theme of EE '95 was "integrating military and civilian efforts in humanitarian assistance and peace operations." We provided material for the conference and incorporated its findings and results into our analyses.

Analytical approach

First, we reviewed the literature and used case studies to identify lessons learned in conducting HAOs [1]. The case studies drew on the Joint Universal Lessons Learned System (JULLS) and on books, articles, technical reports, and interviews. In addition, we attended conferences on HAOs; most productively, we served as participants and analysts at Emerald Express. Based on all our sources, we identified potential changes to doctrine, organization, equipment, and training that would improve USMC capabilities in performing HAOs.

This research memorandum identifies issues, requirements, and alternatives in the area of command and control (C2). The focus is on command relationships and coordination. Other papers from this study, listed on the back cover, address other aspects of HAOs.

This topic is somewhat different from most of the other areas the study team examined. In most cases, the C2 issues are joint or

interagency rather than Marine-specific. We looked at command from the perspective of the Combined/Joint Task Force (C/JTF). The coordination issues we identified apply primarily to the C/JTF and higher levels. Consequently, most of the issues and alternatives we identified are not specific to the Marine Corps; they could apply to another service as well or to the joint community, at the U.S. interagency level, or even to the broader international community of participants in humanitarian assistance. We chose to take this broad approach because the success of these operations depends on cooperation by the extended range of participants; restricting our work to the Marine Corps would have narrowed its scope and applicability.¹ As a result, many of the alternatives are not within the power of the Marine Corps to implement. The Marine Corps could, however, raise these issues through the appropriate channel, such as the joint doctrine process, the regional commanders in chief (CINCs), or the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).

Findings

We discovered that command is not the major issue in HAOs; the main requirement for conducting effective HAOs is coordination. By coordinate, we mean “to harmonize in a common action or effort.”² Coordination can run from the tactical requirement to schedule convoys delivering humanitarian supplies, to the operational requirement to achieve agreement among participating nations on rules of engagement, to the policy requirement to harmonize the efforts of multiple U.S. Government agencies. Coordination needs to take place before a decision is made to intervene, during the planning phase, during the operation, and when preparing for and implementing redeployment and transition. For best effect, coordination is also required on an ongoing basis to improve understanding and communications among the range of participants. As the examples

1. A separate research memorandum [2] covers coordination with relief organizations from the narrower perspective of the Marine Corps. It contains more-specific recommendations for increasing Marine effectiveness in working with these organizations.
2. Definition taken from the *American Heritage Dictionary*.

demonstrate, it is needed at all levels: strategic/policy, operational, and tactical.

Table 1 lists alternative ways for improving coordination and the organizations that would be involved in implementing them. The table reveals that almost all of the alternatives involve action by other organizations as well as the Marine Corps.³ This pattern reinforces our major finding: coordination is the key ingredient in HAOs.

Recommendations

Most of the alternatives in table 1 require action beyond the Marine Corps. The Marine Corps can support these actions through the chain of command, and many of them can be pushed through the joint doctrine process. Doctrine development could begin with the Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC), which has already been the subject of MEF-level Standard Operating Procedures. Other important alternatives that could be pursued are developing doctrine for policy-level organizations in Washington and on scene, and pushing for development of a joint information fusion center that would include representatives of non-governmental and international organizations.

Some of the alternatives would best be developed and adopted by the broader community of participants, but could also be beneficial to the Marine Corps if it acts alone. These include the leadership issues of fostering an attitude of respect for all participants and making room for the concept of support. On its own, the Marine Corps can establish an Additional Military Occupational Specialty (AMOS) to track Marines with experience in the CMOC and reassign these Marines to CMOC billets during HAOs. It can also identify and track Marines with language capabilities so they can be assigned as needed.

Yet another set of alternatives could be adopted if a Marine were selected as commander of an HAO. He could ask for and make use of

3. An exception that does not show up here is training; for more on Marine-specific training requirements, see the study's paper on this subject [3].

Table 1. Alternatives for improving coordination in HAOs

Category/requirement	Organizations Involved in Making Changes												
	USMC	Services	JCS/OSD	CJTF	CINCPAC	Country team	DOS	OFDA/DART	Interagency	NSC	President	NGOs	UN agencies
Doctrine													
Create a template for a political-military-humanitarian plan			x			x	x	x	x				
Designate someone to oversee USG interagency efforts										x	x		
Establish standing interagency team on HAOs									x	x			
Delineate potential service contributions to HAOs	x	x	x										
Establish generic MOUs with USG agencies and NGOs	x	x	x				x	x	x		x	x	
Delegate authority to field personnel									x		x	x	x
Refine process for establishing JTF headquarters	x	x		x	x								
Encourage UN to institute Operational Directive			x				x					x	x
Simplify coalition command arrangements			x	x	x		x					x	x
Foster an attitude of respect for all participants	x	x		x							x	x	x
Make room in military ethos for concept of support	x	x	x	x									
Use CINCPAC to raise mil. issues up chain, pol. issues down			x	x	x								
Make use of political advisor				x	x		x						
Tap the expertise of the country team				x	x	x							
Coordinate with OFDA and its DART				x	x			x					
Develop doctrine for Interagency Assessment Team			x	x	x		x	x	x	x			
Develop doctrine for Information Fusion Center	x	x	x				x	x	x		x	x	
Develop doctrine for Washington Coordination Group	x	x	x				x	x	x	x			
Develop doctrine for Executive Steering Group	x	x	x				x	x	x	x			
Develop doctrine for Civil-Military Operations Center	x	x	x		x		x	x	x	x			
Develop doctrine for focus-of-effort teams	x	x	x					x			x	x	
Organization													
Assign liaison officers liberally	x	x	x	x	x							x	
Identify requirements for and inventory of linguists	x	x	x										
Establish AMOS to track CMOC experience	x												
Track Marines with language and CMOC capabilities	x												
Identify other sources of linguists	x	x	x										
Provide humanitarian advisor to CINCPAC and CJTF				x	x			x			x		
Assign POLAD to CJTF				x	x		x						
Establish deployable joint CMOC	x	x	x	x									
Training													
Hold joint/combined seminars, war games, and CPXes	x	x	x		x			x	x	x	x	x	x
Include interagency and NGO/IO participants at high levels							x	x	x	x	x	x	x

a political advisor and a humanitarian advisor, tap the expertise of the country team, coordinate closely with the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance's (OFDA's) Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), and reorient the CMOC as an information fusion center with focus-of-effort teams providing support.

Road map

The next section describes command issues that lead to the need for coordination. The main focus of the following section is coordination among the many organizations and agencies that participate in HAOs. Finally, we provide a wrap-up.

Command issues in HAOs

This section considers some characteristics of HAOs that directly affect command relationships. These characteristics are different for HAOs than for warfighting operations. They are as follows:

- A multitude of participants
- Issues of accountability
- The role of the military.

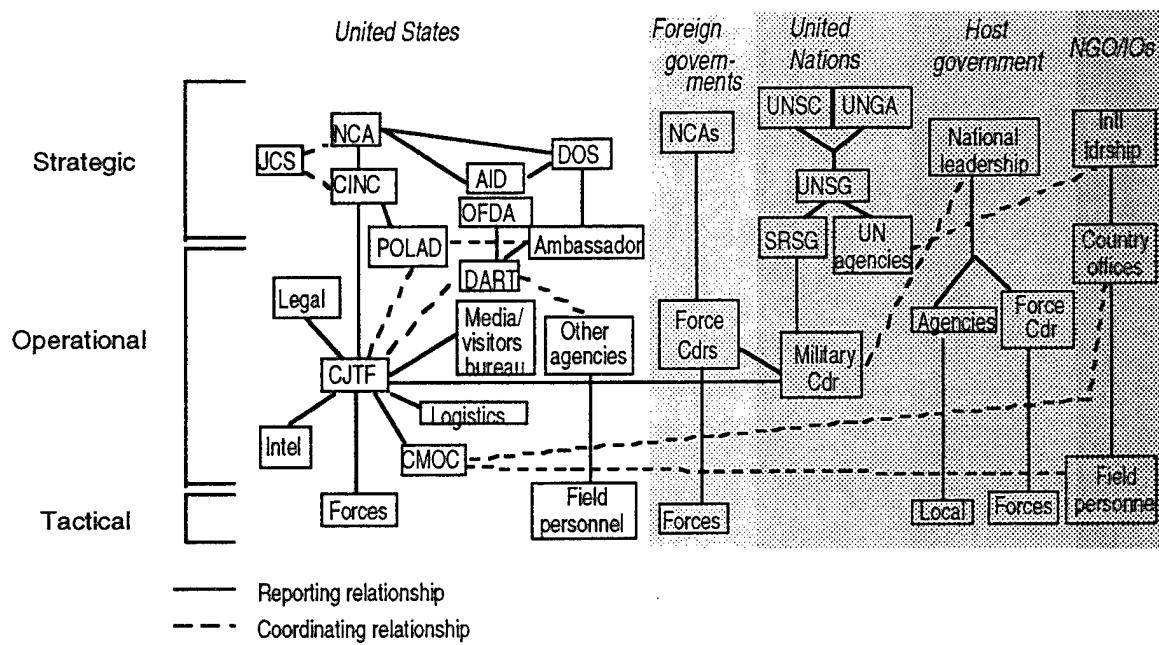
This section discusses each of these characteristics. The discussions reveals that the need for coordination is more prominent than the need for command in HAOs.

A multitude of participants

Figure 1 provides an example of potential command relationships in an HAO.⁴ In this simplified example, it is obvious that command relationships are complicated by the many additional participants in an HAO, compared to a combat operation. Many different types of organizations respond to humanitarian emergencies. They include the United Nations (UN) and various UN departments and agencies; non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as Catholic Relief Services, CARE, and Save the Children; the host-nation government itself; other donor nations; and often coalition military forces. The players tend to be scattered around the globe: at a minimum, in Washington, New York, and Geneva, and at the site of the emergency.

4. This picture was adapted from work done at the Center for Advanced Command Concepts and Technology (CACCT) at National Defense University [4].

Figure 1. Simplified command-and-coordination relationships



These participants have their own “chains of command,” and an integrated HAO needs to work within these chains. For example, coalition partners must answer to their own National Command Authorities (NCAs), even though they may be part of a combined task force led by a U.S. commander. The United Nations may be in charge of an operation, in which case the U.S. military would be working for the UN. Also, there may be one or more host-nation governments with their own forces and NCAs that requested U.S. Government (USG) assistance with their emergency situation. The point is that, although there may be some form of a chain of command, it is complicated and may not always work because of different participants first answering to their own commands, different objectives for participating in the operation, and so forth.

In addition, the non-governmental organizations/private voluntary organizations/international organizations (NGOs/PVOs/IOs) are also major participants in an HAO. Each has its own leadership, policies, country offices, and field teams. They are not tied to any chain

of command, except perhaps their own internal hierarchy. But the military is often supporting these organizations and frequently they know more about the humanitarian situation than the military does. Thus, the military needs to incorporate the NGOs/IOs/PVOs into its decision-making.

Within the U.S. chain of command, the emphasis is different for government agencies in HAOs than it is for warfighting operations. The U.S. response must integrate political, economic, military, and humanitarian activities. The U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) and the Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA), with the State Department, play a large role in HAOs. The AID administrator is the President's Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance, and AID sends a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to determine what the U.S. response should be to a humanitarian crisis.⁵ In addition, the Department of Justice often plays a role if policing is needed in an HAO.

Figure 1 shows the different levels among the HAO players: strategic, operational, and tactical. Where the lines occur between these levels is not always clear. The following is an attempt to delineate those levels, based on discussions at EE 95 [5, 6]. We list the major U.S. participants and give an example of the type of decisions that would be made at each level.

- **Strategy/Policy:** National Command Authorities (NCA), Congress, Cabinet departments (especially State and Defense), and AID. The NCA is supported by the National Security Council (NSC) and its staff in decision-making, and the AID administrator serves as the President's Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance. For the military, the primary strategic participants are the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and the joint staff. A typical decision at this level would be whether the U.S. military should participate in an HAO.

5. In 1993, President Clinton appointed the U.S. AID administrator to be the government's Special Coordinator for International Disaster Assistance.

- **Operational:** Typically, the unified command, or regional CINC, is considered the U.S. military's operational-level organization. However, some think of the CINC as part of the strategic level and consider the Commander, Joint Task Force (CJTF) that is set up to conduct the HAO as the operational-level commander [4].⁶ We concur with this approach. A typical decision at this level would be how to apportion responsibilities among coalition military forces.
- **Tactical:** The tactical level covers the forces involved in an HAO. Coordination at this level often takes place at the local level, or geographically. In Somalia, for example, regional Civil-Military Operations Centers (CMOCs) were set up in each of the nine Humanitarian Relief Sectors [8]. A typical decision at this level would be when and where to conduct security patrols.

As previously mentioned, figure 1 captures the complexity of command relationships in HAOs. Central to mission accomplishment is communication up and down the levels of each of the chains of command pictured. Such communication is an accepted facet of doing business. But unique to HAOs, and equally important to mission accomplishment, is coordination among the different players within each of the levels shown in the figure. Such coordination is important to meet other requirements for HAOs. These requirements include the need to share information, to develop a common view of the situation and what needs to be done, and to plan and operate with these jointly held perspectives in mind.

Accountability

Who's in charge?

Someone must take the lead to ensure a coherent U.S. Government response in an HAO. At the strategic level, interagency coordination is essential; as Special Coordinator, the AID administrator is responsible for ensuring that it takes place. However, it is not clear whether

6. This view is consistent with the JCS division of military tasks into four levels: strategic-national, strategic-theater, operational, and tactical [7].

the AID administrator has the authority to hold Cabinet-level departments accountable for their contributions (or lack thereof) to the interagency effort.

Some problems encountered during Operation Uphold Democracy, in Haiti, will illustrate this point. Some offices within the Department of Justice—the Drug Enforcement Administration and the International Criminal Investigative Training and Assistance Program—agreed in Washington to provide programs and resources but failed to deliver on the ground. The U.S. military force had to take over some of those functions and pay for others out of pocket [9]. Although a political-military plan was developed by the Interagency Working Group for Haiti, no one signed this plan. The situation and the plan changed rapidly, the political-military plan was being used for the first time, and the importance of signatures was not apparent. However, as this example shows, unaccountability can lead to the military picking up the slack.

This issue of accountability at the strategic level was a prominent issue at Emerald Express '95 [5, 6]. Two recommendations were made to enhance accountability:

- **Adopt a political-military plan at the strategic level.** It was recommended that the Haiti political-military plan be adapted to serve as a template for future operations, with modifications to ensure that agencies go on the record with their commitment to the USG effort. For example, it was considered important that this plan be signed by the secretaries of the departments taking part in the operation.
- **Designate a senior individual to oversee the operation** and to ensure that all agencies are held accountable to what was agreed upon in the political-military plan. This person would also be responsible for monitoring the progress of the operation and the changing conditions on the ground. He or she would ensure that, as conditions evolved, the resources would be available to carry out the evolving mission. Some participants at the Emerald Express conference said that the National Security Advisor or his deputy should take on this role. They suggested that, in the aftermath of Iran-Contra, the authority of

the NSC had been downgraded to the extent that it could no longer carry out this function, and that sufficient authority should be restored to the NSC to allow it to do so.

Who should do what?

Let's look next at another overriding question at the strategic level: What organization or group should perform which functions? "It is trite but necessary to observe that, in sorting out the institutional roles, each agency should be given the job it does best" [10, p. 141]. Figuring out and reaching agreement on each organization's comparative advantage should not be done in the heat of the moment, but when all have the luxury of time to think about the division of responsibilities that makes sense, both among organizations and among the levels within organizations. As [10] points out, the cost in lives can be high when agencies debate who is going to perform which task: "Delay is the enemy of disaster management. Delay can kill.... Deciding who should do what in the middle of an emergency when operations to save lives should be well under way is folly."

To solve this problem for U.S. Government agencies, [10] recommends creating a standing subcommittee of the National Security Council on complex emergencies and involving the Congress in assigning roles and structuring responses. The AID administrator would chair this standing group. This arrangement would give the AID administrator the necessary clout to dominate the planning process, clarify roles, and hold other USG agencies accountable.

Others have suggested establishing a broader, permanent humanitarian operations agency to monitor humanitarian assistance missions and to serve as the single coordinating agency for all other participants in any crisis situation.⁷ This center would include representatives of USG agencies (including the military), NGOs, contractors, and regional and host-nation personnel. Part of its charter would be

7. As envisioned by [11], this standing agency would have an ambitious charter, including training, identifying requirements, establishing evaluation criteria, providing mission statement input, disseminating information, and performing assessments.

to develop memoranda of understanding (MOUs) to divide responsibilities among organizations. For the military, internal divisions of responsibility can be accomplished through doctrine and standard operating procedures (SOPs).

The attempt to define roles and divide responsibilities is most problematic for the NGO community. NGOs are independent actors who report to no common authority, and there are limits to how closely they will collaborate among themselves and with the military. Some will want to retain maximum independence and flexibility and will not be interested in advance coordination. These limits vary according to organization; [12] captures the important differences in culture of the various types of humanitarian organizations and the different imperatives each faces.⁸

A related question is at what level decisions should be made. In a situation requiring coordination among many different organizations, delegation of authority is particularly important. If many organizations refer decisions up the line to remote headquarters, delays will accumulate and decision-making will slow to a crawl. For the UN and UN agencies, analysis has shown a need for greater delegation of authority to their personnel in the field [13, 14]. For all organizations operating in the humanitarian assistance environment, mission-type orders, which tell what to accomplish rather than how to do it, and liberal delegation of authority seem to be appropriate.

However, certain foundations must be in place for mission-type orders to work. Each organization must have qualified field personnel with the education, training, or experience to make good decisions. These people must also have access to the information necessary to make those decisions. Doctrine to undergird training, education, and decisions is also useful, especially when reliance must be placed on less-experienced personnel.

If these things have not been done beforehand, mission-type orders may not be appropriate. A continuously manned headquarters

8. This excellent article candidly conveys both the strengths and limitations of the various participants in HAOs.

connected to the field with timely and reliable communications may substitute. There will, however, be a cost in time. If many organizations require this type of contact with their headquarters, time costs will add up, group decisions will stagnate, and coordination will take place after the fact, if at all.

The role of the military

Political

HAOs tend to be highly political in nature. The nature and importance of the national interest being served are not clear cut. In many cases, the objectives and the end-state of the mission are ill-defined. It is unlikely that the military commander will have the freedom to operate as independently as he would in combat. The military dimension of the operation is not the central focus, and the military commander is not in overall charge. These factors, combined with the visibility given these operations by television news and the low public tolerance for U.S. casualties, create a fertile situation for micromanagement up to the highest levels.

Supporting

In HAOs, the military force is there to support those providing assistance to the affected population. This role of support requires active coordination with other participants. The military needs to find out from the relief organizations what kinds of support they need and when it is needed.

Coordination is important because the military almost always arrives at a fairly late stage in relief efforts. Relief and development workers are already at work and are knowledgeable about local conditions and needs. The military effort should support, not supplant, the ongoing humanitarian effort. The military will leave before the humanitarians do, and so it must plan its contributions so that they can be sustained after the military leaves. Getting the advice of relief and development professionals to ensure sustainability is another important reason for coordination.

In addition, coordination is important to prevent duplication of effort. The military should be the source of last resort because it is the most expensive means of meeting needs [10]. In general, the military should be called upon only if it is the sole organization that can provide a specific service (such as security), or if the needs are so extensive and so urgent that only the vast military logistics system can supply them in time (as in Rwanda). Because the military is the most expensive alternative, it needs to know what other participants are bringing to the effort so that it does not duplicate ongoing efforts by the relief community, or transport and provide resources that are not needed.

Command issues conclusions

All of these factors for HAOs—multiple participants, accountability, and the role of the military—can contribute to problems with command relationships. In fact, these factors can be beyond command. NGOs are not part of the command structure; USAID cannot effectively coordinate an HAO because of its lack of control over Cabinet-level departments; and the military is usually not in charge of an HAO. To make an HAO work requires coordination among the players and between the different levels of command—policy/strategic, operational, and tactical. The next section discusses ways to facilitate or improve the necessary coordination.

Improving command and coordination

In the previous section, we pointed out the command relationship problems and the need to coordinate so that an HAO goes more smoothly. HAOs require coordinated efforts by many organizations. In terms of the U.S. Government's response, the military is in support, the political/humanitarian element is primary, and a number of government agencies are likely to be involved.

In addition, organizations outside the U.S. Government are important participants. These may include the UN and its humanitarian agencies, many non-governmental and private voluntary organizations, and international organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross and the International Organization for Migration. The host-nation government (if it exists) is also a key player.

To restate the obvious, achieving the most effective, integrated response requires coordination. In some cases, coordination may even be the primary mission of the military force. Such was the case in an HAO game held at CNA [15]. In one scenario, sizable U.S. forces would not arrive for several weeks. The military, with its extensive C2 assets and experience in coordinating large-scale efforts, was assigned the immediate mission of coordinating the relief efforts.

This section has two parts. The first deals with issues of command within the U.S. military and coordination within a coalition force. The second discusses coordination within the U.S. Government, between the military and NGOs/PVOs/IOs, and among all HAO participants.

U.S. military

Forming a Joint Task Force

One C2 issue common to warfighting and HAOs is the best way to staff a Joint Task Force (JTF) headquarters. U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) has developed the concept of a deployable JTF augmentation cell (DJTFAC). This is a group from CINC and service-component staffs who are earmarked to deploy with a JTF commander and help round out the jointness of the JTF staff. They train together regularly in peacetime and are prepared to deploy within 12 hours of notification and remain for the duration of the operation [16].

Other CINCs have developed, or are considering, similar arrangements. U.S. Atlantic Command (USACOM), for example, recently revamped its Deployable Joint Task Force (DJTF) 140 cadre (140C) along the lines of PACOM's DJTFAC. When DJTF-140C was established in 1993, it was intended to be part of the CINC's Operations Planning Group in crisis-response situations and to deploy to the designated JTF to form its core planning cell. It would participate in training, help in crisis action planning (CAP), and link CINC and JTF planning. However, it has not been fully used in this way; for example, DJTF-140C was not activated for the 1994 intervention in Haiti. In addition, the training it was tasked to perform overlapped with the function of USACOM's Joint Training Team (JTT).

Recognizing these deficiencies, USACOM reorganized the DJTF-140C as the Operations Planning Team (OPT) and combined it with the JTT to form a DJTFAC-OPT. The changes eliminate duplicative tasking and increase the support provided to CJTFs. Both groups are drawn from USACOM directorates and would deploy with the JTF for no longer than 30 days. The OPT serves as the interface between the CINC and the CJTF. It would concentrate on helping with crisis action planning (CAP), developing the JTF operations order, and preparing future plans. Members of the JTT would help the CJTF get his entire staff off the ground—guiding, training, and mentoring their counterparts on the JTF staff. These organizations should help ensure that the CJTF has sufficient support from all the services to carry out his mission and do his planning, whether deliberate or crisis action planning, in a timely manner.

Attitudes

Many analysts have noted the differences in organizational cultures of the participants in HAOs (for example, see [2], [12], and [17]). One of the characteristics of U.S. military forces is their sense of being in charge, of not “working for” anyone other than the American people. A slight change in orientation—incorporating the concept of support—may make a difference in the troops’ attitudes toward these operations and increase their effectiveness. This change would require leadership, commitment, and education.

Liaison officers

Sprinkled throughout the literature on HAOs is a call for more liaison officers (LNOs). These officers can be invaluable in establishing and maintaining vital communications between HAO participants. LNOs prove useful with coalition partners; at UN headquarters and agencies, both at headquarters and in the field; with the host nation (depending on circumstances); with OFDA’s DART; and with other U.S. service LNOs to the JTF. This last requirement was cited by JULLS from Operation Uphold Democracy: “Liaison officers are crucial to joint force command and control. For effective 24-hour coverage, at least two people per position are needed, and they must be familiar with joint procedures and the command they represent [18].”

Translator-linguists

Translator-linguists play a vital role in coordinating all international operations. Increased involvement in HAOs means more-varied requirements and an increased need for interpreters in languages that have not traditionally been of interest to the U.S. military, such as Haitian-Creole and Somali. Rather than increasing the numbers of professional linguists in such languages, the military uses service members with other occupations to serve as translators when the need arises. A recent CNA study revealed that improvements are needed in determining requirements for linguists, identifying and tracking service members with language capabilities, and increasing the number of linguists in certain languages [19]. Some of these issues can only be solved at the joint level; however, the Marine Corps

should reassess its language requirements, track language capabilities more completely, and make plans for tapping other sources of linguists, such as Reservists and former members of the Peace Corps and the Foreign Service.⁹

Tracking skills

Making use of experience gained in prior operations is key to improving performance the next time. Studies such as this are one way to recycle lessons learned. Another way is to assign Marines with experience in HAOs to other HAOs. A skill identifier would make it easier to take advantage of experience gained in prior operations. An additional MOS could be assigned to Marines with experience in CMOCs, for example, so that they could be easily identified and assigned to billets requiring their expertise.

Training

Another study publication covers training requirements for HAOs [3]. Here we need only point out that training in coordination and practice in putting together and using the coordination mechanisms suggested here will reap benefits. Games and command-post exercises involving the military, OSD, U.S. AID, the State Department (DOS), other USG agencies, NGOs, IOs, contractors, potential coalition partners, and the UN *at a high level* are recommended. It is possible to get the right people involved, given leadership at the top.

Building and operating a coalition

Some of the issues involved with operating in a military coalition are not unique to HAOs.¹⁰ These include several factors that inhibit the development of an agile, effective force that reacts quickly and appropriately as situations develop. First is the reality that each national force will maintain a chain of command to its own national authorities. Second is the potential for problems with span of control. For

9. Using former Peace Corps volunteers was suggested at an Army workshop on HAOs, documented in [11].
10. This discussion about coalition issues and their resolution draws heavily on [20].

example, 24 nations contributed forces to the UNITAF force in Somalia, too many to report directly to one commander [14]. Finally the coalition member forces bring with them differences in capabilities, cultures, languages, and doctrine. These factors make coordination and decision-making difficult and time consuming. It is worth considering some ways to circumvent these difficulties.

Ensuring common understanding of the operation

The Emerald Express working group on coalitions suggested that in a UN operation, the UN should institute an Operational Directive to ensure that all coalition members share a common understanding of the operation [21]. This document would help ensure that combined planning takes place, with all contributing nations having the opportunity to participate. As in the U.S. interagency environment, giving each nation a voice in this process would not only improve the product, it would also enhance the coalition partners' commitment to the mission and their stake in its outcome. This document would describe the situation, define a clear mission and objectives, and specify the tasks and capabilities required and the rules of engagement (ROE). It would also specifically address limits and constraints, delineate interoperability requirements, and lay out policy for a public information program, civil affairs operations, media relations, and legal considerations.

Although this is a good concept, implementing it may be difficult, especially if time is a constraint. Offers to join a coalition probably will not occur all at once; in Somalia, for example, an initial flood was followed by a drawn-out trickle as countries weighed the costs and benefits of volunteering, and as coalition leaders made appeals to specific countries for participation [14, 22]. Still, even if all participants have not been identified, it seems useful for centralized planning at the UN to take place, with coalition members joining in as they make a commitment.

Commanders should also create and distribute a set of plans to cover the most likely contingencies [20]. These would provide guidance to all coalition partners, allow planning by consensus before an emergency erupts, and circumvent lengthy delays when a problem arises.

Simplifying and clarifying the chain of command

Given the inherent complexity in coalition operations, command arrangements should be as simple and clear as possible.¹¹ To start, it is desirable, though not always possible, to delineate the chain of command early in the planning phase. For the United States, this requires close liaison among the UN, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Department of State, the CINC, and the JTF. Within the U.S. military, settling on a command structure is an iterative process, with constant communication among the various levels of command [24]. Although the identity and position of each nation in the command scheme may not be defined in advance, at the very least, the skeleton of the organization chart—with categories, if not all specific contributors—should be ironed out before deployment.

Methods of simplifying command arrangements are to cluster smaller national contingents under “natural leader” countries, as was done in Desert Storm and the UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM), and to separate forces geographically. However, the advantages of geographic separation should be considered within the broader context of force capabilities.

Assigning missions and sequencing forces

Coalition operations will always have to take into account inherent differences in national capabilities and cultures. The commander should assign missions and areas to forces according to their capabilities; for example, the most capable forces should be assigned to the areas that are most likely to erupt into violence.¹²

Complicating matters further is friction between nations that are part of the same coalition. These differences also need to be addressed in making assignments. For example, in Somalia UNOSOM had to be sensitive to animosities between India and Pakistan when assigning responsibilities to their forces.

11. According to Joint Pub 0-2: “When organizing joint forces with multinational forces, simplicity and clarity are critical” [23].

12. For more on military planning for HAOs, see [25].

To integrate coalition partners into Operation Restore Hope, CINCENT established a Coalition Working Group in Tampa [22]. This arrangement allowed the CINC to prioritize the flow of forces into the theater and to handle many of the logistics concerns involving coalition partners. This arrangement relieved the commander in the field of this highly political and administrative burden.

Communicating with coalition members

Among the requirements of coalition operations are the ability to communicate easily and to achieve consensus among participants. One way of meeting these goals is the liberal assignment of liaison officers. U.S. force commanders should seek personnel with facility in more than one language from all coalition partners and assign them as appropriate [26]. Such liaisons will improve command and control, and ease cultural tensions. Another technique that proved useful in Desert Storm was the creation of over 100 three- and four-person issue-coordination teams, with one representative from each of the relevant force commanders (U.S., British, French, and Arabic/Islamic) [20]. Besides these means, which would be used during an operation, more can be done on an ongoing basis. As [27, p. 64] points out, "Creating an effective coalition without previously established, viable working relationships is extremely difficult." Officers who are likely to participate in such operations can get together in seminars, war games, and exercises. Such periodic meetings would help create better working relationships when emergencies erupt.

Using mission-type orders, which tell what to accomplish, rather than how to do it, is another means of enhancing communication by circumventing national differences in procedures. Another, long-term step in the direction of overcoming differences and improving communication would be developing and disseminating international doctrine.

Finally, the position of the United States as the preeminent military power may paradoxically impede building an effective coalition. Believing that one is the best in the world may make it more difficult to appreciate and respect the contributions of less highly developed militaries. It is important to realize that all coalition military person-

nel are putting themselves at risk, the less-capable potentially more so than the technologically sophisticated. Good relationships among coalition partners are vital. Respecting the abilities of others helps foster confidence in one another's and one's own capabilities and creates a more cohesive force.

Coordination within the U.S. Government

Within the U.S. Government, decision-makers need to think through the political effects of military operations and, conversely, understand the effects of policy on the military. One way to help ensure that both the policy-maker and the military operator comprehend the implications of their actions for the other is to use all appropriate channels to raise and explore these issues.

The role of the CINC

One such avenue is the CINC. By virtue of his intermediary position between the commander in the field and the JCS, he can play a pivotal role in bridging policy and operations. As the primary U.S. contact for coalition military partners, the CINC can gauge the potential contributions and complications introduced by the incoming military contingents. He can raise concerns through the JCS if the political desire to include as many participants as possible begins to overburden the logistic and command resources of the Commander, Combined Task Force.

Interagency coordination

The commander in the field should incorporate the perspectives of his political advisor (if he has one) and the ambassador (or if there is none, as in Somalia, the U.S. special representative) into his decision-making process. A close relationship between the ambassador and the CJTF helps ensure that the U.S. response is coordinated in country. The ambassador and the country team can provide invaluable local expertise and political perspectives to the JTF.

At the policy-strategic level, an active Interagency Working Group (IWG) can ensure that the links between policy and operations are

considered at the highest levels. Besides working out the political-military plan, as described earlier, this IWG would continue to ensure that the perspectives and concerns of all USG participants in the response continue to be heard as the operation evolves.

In addition, the commander and the ambassador may want to establish a U.S. consultation group in country. This group would essentially comprise the country team plus additional JTF staff representatives and in-country representatives of other USG agencies that are participating in the operation. Such coordination of official U.S. actors in country can improve USG coordination with the other organizations involved, as described in the next section. There we consider two types of coordination: direct (bilateral) contact and group coordination. Depending on the circumstances and the functions involved, one or the other type of coordination may be more effective.

Direct coordination with outside organizations

Coordination with the UN

Besides the coalition and the host nation, the United States should coordinate with two major types of non-USG groups: the UN and NGOs/PVOs/IOs.¹³ A mechanism at UN headquarters allows for centralized coordination. For HAOs, the central point would be the UN Department for Humanitarian Affairs (UNDHA). The UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations (UNDPKO) may also be involved, depending on the operation. Coordination with these departments could routinely take place with liaison officers or through personnel exchange programs [2].

During operations involving the UN, liaison officers in New York and on scene with the UN Development Program Resident Representative (UNDP RESREP) or the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) may prove useful. These are the entities that typically

13. A thorough examination of the value and means of working with these groups is in [2].

coordinate the efforts of all UN agencies in country. In some cases, however, a different lead UN agency will be designated; for example, in Rwanda, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) took the lead. The U.S. JTF coordinated closely with UNHCR in processing and screening requests for U.S. military air support, as well as other tasking [28]. This example indicates the need for flexibility in procedures for coordination in HAOs; doctrine and SOPs that deal with HAOs should take into account the range of organizational arrangements that are possible in these multiorganization operations.

Coordination with NGOs/PVOs/IOs

The rest of the relief community is more diffuse, so centralized coordination is more difficult. One way for the military to interact with the myriad NGOs is through AID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA). In Washington, an enlarged IWG that includes representatives from large NGOs or NGO umbrella organizations, such as InterAction, may also prove useful. Participants at Emerald Express wrestled with the issue of including NGOs in interagency working groups at different levels, in Washington and at the CINC's headquarters. It was generally agreed that in many cases, OFDA can represent NGO concerns effectively, but that actual NGO representation at meetings should also be sought periodically. One issue is which NGOs should be involved. The help of OFDA and InterAction should be sought to identify NGO principals who are willing and able to represent the views of a range of organizations.

For major disasters, OFDA sends a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to the affected area early in the development of a U.S. humanitarian response. A DART consists of U.S. officials and contractors with a variety of disaster-relief skills; it typically serves as the initial focal point for the USG response. The CINC should coordinate with this group early in the planning stage; ideally the DART would include military representatives. If not, the CINC's own Humanitarian Assistance Survey Team (HAST) (or equivalent organization) should interact with the DART.

When a decision is made to send in U.S. military forces, the CINC and the CJTF should coordinate with NGOs as they develop and select a course of action and during execution planning. Another study paper covers in detail alternative ways of opening up the military planning process to other participants [25]. Ideally, the CINC and JTF Operational Planning Team (OPT) will periodically draw in representatives of the relief community to share information and outline participants' roles and contributions.

As the U.S. response to the disaster builds, the DART will perform such functions as managing USG onsite relief activities, gathering and disseminating information on the disaster situation, and monitoring the effectiveness of U.S.-funded relief programs [2]. Most important to the military, the DART can serve as an intermediary with the NGOs on scene. Day-to-day direct coordination with NGOs can take place through a Civil Military Operations Center (CMOC), discussed in the next section.

Another channel between NGOs and the military has recently been established. In April 1995, the permanent position of Humanitarian Advisor (HUMAD) was established at PACOM. Analogous to the POLAD, this advisor comes from the humanitarian community through the auspices of OFDA. Thought should be given to establishing such a permanent liaison position on the other theater CINCs' staffs.

In addition, at Emerald Express '95, LtGen Zinni (I MEF Commander) expressed interest in providing a HUMAD to the CJTF as soon as the JTF command was designated. The HUMAD would be part of the staff and would provide information on the NGOs, liaison, and advice on working with them.

Mechanisms to facilitate coordination among all participants

In this section, we discuss mechanisms to facilitate coordination among all the participants in an HAO. We discuss the function that each mechanism is facilitating. These functions are assessment for intervention, information fusion, and operation execution. These functions parallel phases of the crisis action planning process, as discussed in [25]. The proposed coordination mechanisms should help

ensure that the necessary coordination between participants takes place during all phases of the operation, from situation development and assessment to planning, execution, and transition.

We recognize that creating new coordination mechanisms is not a panacea. The potential for bureaucratic overload exists and must be resisted. We begin with a discussion of the strengths and dangers of this approach.

Designing new mechanisms

Doctrine should be written at various levels to document and describe such mechanisms and, through the publications process, to reach consensus on the membership, functions, and relationships of these coordinating groups. The Marine Corps should contribute to these efforts. Care should be taken to prevent these new organizations from becoming bureaucratic entities that slow down and hinder, rather than enhance, decision-making.

Remember that the military is not automatically in charge of such organizations. It can, however, play a leading role by providing a doctrinal template indicating how such structures could be built. Military doctrine can fill a vacuum. Its disciplined approach—drawing on lessons learned and exposing drafts to numerous reviewers—can help ensure that unproductive history is not repeated. The military may find it helpful to involve participants from other organizations in the review process. Such people can not only improve the content, but their participation can make it more likely that other participants in HAOs will follow the doctrine that is developed.

Two important points should be kept in mind in designing and prescribing these groups: preserving flexibility and assigning functions. Some lessons have been learned over the past few years of HAO experience, and these lessons should be codified. At the same time, it is important to recognize that each operation is different and may require different organizational arrangements for maximum effectiveness. Both flexibility and standard operating procedures are valuable and needed.

The second point is the need to delineate the responsibilities of the coordinating groups. Different organizations with overlapping functions can lead to confusion and contradictory decisions.

Another caution must be stated. When the military enters a situation, its natural tendency is to take control; however, this approach is counterproductive in HAOs. In almost all humanitarian emergencies, NGOs will already be on the scene.¹⁴ In many cases, they will have been actively involved in local communities for years. UN agencies and the U.S. country team will also have been involved. And, after the military leaves, the other organizations stay on. Given that the military arrives late and leaves early, any organizations that are put into place should *support, not supplant*, the networks that already exist.

We will now describe proposed coordination mechanisms. These mechanisms are organized according to the phases of an operation, beginning with assessment and ending with operation execution.

Assessment for intervention

Interagency Assessment Team

One working group at Emerald Express recommended formation of this new assessment team to inject more and better information into the process that decides whether a U.S. Government (USG) intervention should take place. The Interagency Assessment Team (IAT) would consist of representatives from all USG agencies likely to be involved in an intervention. It would be led jointly by the National Security Council (NSC) and the State Department and would be augmented by representatives from the UN, NGOs, and regional organizations. This team would visit the site of the emergency early, before any decision had been made to intervene. It would provide different agencies with a common ground of exposure to conditions in the affected region. All agencies would have access to the information collected, and it would all be gathered at one time. The team would be broadly based, with active participation by multiple USG and, potentially, NGO/PVO/IO representatives to ensure that all relevant

14. One exception that comes to mind is Operation Provide Comfort.

perspectives would be included. Such broad representation would also encourage commitment by agencies, such as the Department of Justice, that have not been full participants in interventions in the past. The product would be a single report to a Standing Interagency Team (SIT) on humanitarian emergencies.¹⁵ As a result of the assessment, this high-level group would have a common understanding of the conditions and could therefore make more-informed judgments as a team.

Whether an IAT should be created remains open to question. Many agencies, such as the military, will still feel a need to do their own assessments. Some participants at Emerald Express expressed the belief that the problem is not too little assessment, but rather a failure to share information among organizations and agencies. Alternatives to an IAT would be a more formal process for sharing assessments done by individual organizations or an earlier-deployed, combined DART/HAST, as was mentioned above.

In addition, many of the organizations that would be involved in an HAO maintain presence routinely in countries around the world. For example, DOD has its attaches, the State Department has ambassadors and counsels, the UN has the UN Development Programme, and the NGOs have field agents. All of these are potential sources of information on an evolving crisis. If the recommendation for an Interagency Assessment Team is not adopted, wider, faster, and more efficient sharing of information from in-place field personnel across organizations should be pursued, perhaps through establishing a Humanitarian Assistance Fusion Center, as described next.

Information fusion

Humanitarian Assistance Information Fusion Center (HAIFC). An alternative or a complement to the IAT would be an information fusion center that would collect, analyze, and disseminate information on potential and actual HAO sites. The great bulk of information would come from open sources; much of it is already available on the Internet. The HAIFC would evaluate the information, compress it by

15. The SIT would make the decision to send the assessment team in the first place.

removing redundancy, and present it in a useful format. The Center would include military, interagency, NGO/PVO/IO, and possibly UN representation. The HAIFC is discussed at length in [25].

Planning

As discussed previously, the OPTs should include representation from the key participants in an HAO to ensure that these players' perspectives are included in the military operations. At the policy level, there is no mechanism to facilitate planning coordination. During EE 95, a Washington Coordination Group (WCG) was proposed to fulfill this function. It would also facilitate coordination at the policy level during the execution phase of the HAO.

Washington Coordination Group

This group would be the headquarters-level analogue of the CMOC. Essentially, it would consist of the USG Interagency Working Group, plus representatives of the headquarters of the other major players: UN, NGOs, and IOs. This group would try to coordinate policy among organizations and provide policy interpretations to guide implementation at the operational level. It would coordinate closely with the Executive Steering Group (ESG), which is described in the next section.

Execution

As the U.S. military has gained experience in large, multinational HAOs in the past several years, one coordinating organization has recurred across operations. This is the Civil-Military Operations Center (CMOC). The CMOC was developed to coordinate relief organizations' requests for military assistance in country. It was set up to handle day-to-day coordination and execution of individual NGO requests for convoy protection, transportation, and other types of military support. It also serves an important role in information exchange.

The very success of the CMOC in coordinating the efforts of the different participants has resulted in its being overloaded with demands it was not set up to meet. The CMOC has become *the* focus of coordi-

At Emerald Express '95, it became readily apparent that more coordination was needed during operation execution than the CMOC could provide. Working independently, many working groups devised new coordination mechanisms to handle their areas of responsibility. Drawing on their experiences in Iraq, Somalia, Rwanda, and Haiti, EE participants recommended the set of major organizations described below.¹⁶

These organizations would help harmonize the efforts of civilians and the military during planning and execution at all levels—policy, operational, and tactical.

Civil Military Operations Center

Given the success of the CMOC in Bangladesh, Somalia, Rwanda, and Haiti, steps are being taken to incorporate it systematically into military theory and practice. It has begun to appear in joint publications and SOPS.¹⁷ These efforts should be continued and refined.

Although a CMOC-like entity has been established in major HAOs since Provide Comfort, little about it has been standardized. Depending in part on the service leading the JTF, terminology has also varied. The CMOC in Haiti, for example, did not deal directly with NGO representatives. It was located at the Joint Operations Center (JOC), inside the secure military compound. Instead, a subset of the CMOC called the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Center (HACC) handled NGO requests for assistance. It was placed at the USAID complex, several miles away from the JOC. The different names create the potential for confusion and miscommunication among service members who have served in different operations. The potential is evidenced further by a draft multiservice publication that describes a “HACC” to assist with interagency planning and coordination” at the *CINC* level [29, p.3–5]. Common terminology should be established to prevent such problems as using the same term to mean two very different entities.

16. For more discussion of these organizations and others suggested during the conference, see [5, 6].

17. See, for example, [29] and [30].

In Rwanda, the UN Development Program adapted the concept of the CMOC to the larger HAO context and established an On-Site Operations Coordination Center (OSOCC) [31]. This center included representation from UN agencies, USAID, OFDA, the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR), the U.S. JTF, affected countries, IOs, and NGOs. Under this arrangement, the U.S. CMOC operated as a cell within the OSOCC. This counter-example shows the need for some flexibility to allow the U.S. coordination structures to fit in most effectively with the larger humanitarian effort.

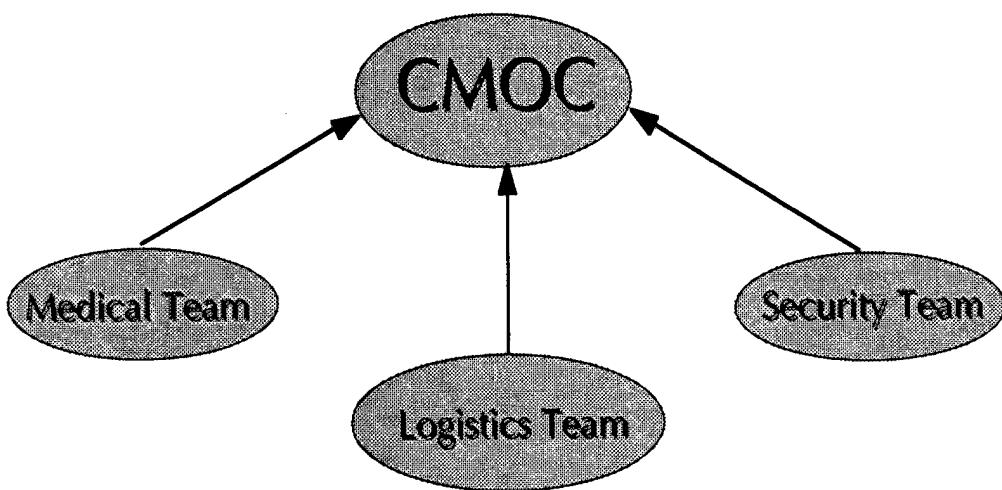
A change in organization, which might be costly but could reap big benefits in effectiveness, would create a deployable CMOC. This group would be analogous to the DJTFACs at USACOM and PACOM. Each CINC could have such a group, which would immediately deploy as a survey team to the affected area, and then become the core of the CMOC as the operation unfolded.

Focus-of-effort teams

In our analysis of Emerald Express, CNA observed a common thread running across several functional working groups. This was the need for what we call focus-of-effort teams. As described above, the CMOC was initially proposed to address execution coordination functions. These functions included civil-military policy issues; prioritizing health, logistics, security, and infrastructure humanitarian needs; and information exchange. Some participants noted the overload of responsibilities being directed toward the CMOC, and proposed other mechanisms to address these functions. Some also noted that the military may not be the best organization to prioritize the humanitarian needs of the local population. Independently, several working groups proposed *focus-of-effort teams* to address military support for humanitarian assistance. The CNA study team developed this concept further by linking these focus-of-effort teams to the CMOC, so that requests for support could be coordinated and operationalized. Figure 2 illustrates this concept.

that requests for support could be coordinated and military resources assigned to meet them operationalized. Figure 2 illustrates this concept.

Figure 2. Focus-of-effort team concept



The Medical Working Group felt that the military should not be setting overall policy in the health field, but that its control over ports and airfields in effect gives it that power. This is because UN relief organizations, NGOs/PVOs/IOs, and other organizations with needs for medical or support supplies must submit their requests for port access or for delivery of supplies to the CMOC. This structure puts the military in the position of determining the medical and public-health needs and setting priorities for international humanitarian assistance. Instead, the Medical Working Group thought that UN Health Coordinator should serve as the honest broker for those with competing health priorities, by leading a health committee or team of agencies active in the health sector. This team would set overall policy in the health field and formulate a proposed set of priorities for allocating task-force resources. The health team would then submit the

priorities to the CMOC, which would weigh the operational reality against these priorities.

The Logistics Working Group suggested that a Civil-Military Logistics Center (CMLC) be formed to take some of the logistics burden off the CMOC. This center would provide a direct interface between relief organizations and the military on logistics-related matters. We propose that instead the CMLC be a logistics team, similar to the health team described above. It could have strong NGO representation so that the NGOs could influence the priorities for such things as water purification units; petroleum, oil, and lubricant supply; and food transportation. The logistics team would submit the logistics priorities to the CMOC, just as the medical team did, to weigh the operational reality against these priorities.

The JTF Working Group proposed a similar arrangement to prioritize security requirements. A security team, with representation from NGOs and other organizations, but with the military predominating, would focus on security issues to feed to the CMOC.

These are some examples of teams that would typically be appropriate in an HAO. The actual teams that are formed should be tailored to the needs of the specific operation. Given that these teams would perform the substantive work of the CMOC (dealing with logistics, security, supply, and health questions), what is left for the CMOC to do? It serves as an on-scene information fusion center. The CMOC becomes the place where the priorities of the functional teams are weighed against military resources and constraints and come together into a plan for assignment of military forces.

Executive Steering Group

The Executive Steering Group (ESG), situated in country, would take over policy-level issues from the CMOC, which functions and is staffed at the operational level. The ESG's key functions would be to establish priorities and to reconcile the roles played by different organizations. It would also identify issues to be resolved out of theater and pass these concerns on to the Washington Coordination Group (WCG). The ESG would consist of the senior military commander, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, the

UN Resident Coordinator, an OFDA representative, the U.S. ambassador, representatives of the host nation and coalition partners, and a consortium of NGOs. The ESG would coordinate extensively with the WCG during execution.

Wrap-up

The nature of HAOs—the myriad organizations involved, few of whom report to a common superior; the independence and vehement neutrality that many espouse; the late arrival and early departure of the U.S. military component—means that although coordination may be a force multiplier, it will not be easily achieved.

As is evident from table 1, which lists the alternatives for improving coordination, there is little the Marines can do *in isolation* to increase coordination. Exceptions are internal training and better tracking of linguists and Marines with CMOC experience.

Other, broader changes will need to be embraced by the larger community of HAO participants. Much can be done within the U.S. military; other improvements are in the hands of the U.S. Government. Yet another set of changes will need the participation and cooperation of other nations, the UN and its agencies, other international organizations, and the NGO/PVO community. The Marines can, however, play an active role in raising these alternatives through the chain of command, the joint doctrine process, and participation in conferences and workshops.

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